



NEWS RELEASE

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Runa Matsushita, violinist from Towson High School, named 2023 BCPS Young Soloist winner

Towson, Md. – The Baltimore County Public Schools Office of Performing Arts has selected Runa Matsushita, a violinist and Grade 12 student at Towson High School, as the winner of the 2023 BCPS Young Soloist program.

As the BCPS Young Soloist, Matsushita will perform the first movement of Sergei Prokofiev's "Violin Concerto No. 2," accompanied by members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, at the annual BCPS Side by Side Concert. The 2023 Side by Side Concert will take place at Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall on Tuesday, March 28.

The selection process for BCPS Young Soloist begins with music teachers nominating students. Those students then audition onstage at Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in partnership with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Matsushita started playing the violin when she was three years old. At the age of seven, she joined the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestra (BSYO). She has won first place in the BSYO concerto competition each year that she has competed. She performed the first movements from a Bruch violin concerto, a Mendelssohn violin concerto, and a Paganini violin concerto with the BSYO and gave a virtual performance of first movement of a Sibelius violin concerto as competition winner in 2021.

Matsushita's solo debut with a professional orchestra was when she was 11 years old with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. On that occasion, she performed as a soloist for the BSO's family concert series and played the first movement of Vivaldi's "Winter" in multiple concerts. She was then

invited to play the same movement with the BSO in their “Star-Spangled Spectacular” concert in the summer of 2018.

Among the many competitions Matsushita has won are the VIVO International Music Competition, American Fine Arts Festival Romantic Music International Competition, International Grande Music Competition, Mary Smart Concerto Competition at the Summit Music Festival, National OPUS Competition, and National Chamber Ensemble Young Artist Competition.

Matsushita has performed in front of Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the Japanese Ambassador's residence and has performed in such venues as the Weil Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center.

In 2020, Matsushita participated in the Sounding Point Academy and studied with Robert Lipsett, and she participated in the Heifetz International Music Institute in 2021 and 2022, which enabled her to study with renowned violinists Nicolas Kitchen, Grigory Kalinovsky, Kyung-Sun Lee, and Ilya Kaler.

Over the past year, Runa has soloed with the Amadeus Orchestra and again with the Baltimore Symphony. She studies violin with June Huang, director of strings and assistant professor of violin at the Dewberry School of Music at George Mason University, and Kalinovsky, professor of music in violin at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Runa plays a J. B. Vuillaume violin, sponsored by the Virtu Foundation.

(Editor’s note: A photo of Matsushita can be found in a [BCPS Flickr album](#).)

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